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# **Soldier/Statesmen: Do They Matter?**

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## **SOLDIER/STATESMEN: DO THEY MATTER?**

This essay explores the history, importance, and relevance of the soldier/statesman. Using pertinent examples from Alexander the Great to General Eisenhower, historical lessons of the soldier and statesmanship emerge and add to the analysis and discussion in the contemporary debate. Comparing the failure of U.S. efforts in Vietnam to successes in the Gulf War, a clearer picture of the importance of the soldier/statesman comes forth.

The historical lessons from past soldier/statesman and the contrasting results in Vietnam and the Gulf War underscore the need for soldier/statesmen. The question that arises is, "What can we do to prepare soldier/statesmen for tomorrow's inevitable challenges?"

Three areas in need of a greater concentration of effort become apparent. Self-development, in terms of magnifying the feedback loop to senior leaders, is one area. Additionally, changes in our military's institutional training structure and curriculums is overdue. We train and fight in a "joint world" -- leader education must refocus along these lines. Finally, more attention must be dedicated to ensuring the soldier/statesmen of tomorrow receive the proper blend of operational assignments and experiences needed to shape them for future challenges.

The soldier/statesman is a vital member of our national decisionmaking team. This essay provides a prescription for success in ensuring the soldier/statesmen of tomorrow are ready when called.

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## INTRODUCTION

As a bonafide Baby Boomer, the mystery and aura of the Vietnam War have often clouded my thought. This is especially true as I've progressed through my career in the Profession of Arms. As with many Americans, from all generations, I've struggled to uncover the reasons for our miserable failure. Coupled with our tremendous triumph in the Gulf War twenty years later, the question of cause for our Vietnam failure burns even brighter -- thus, the genesis for this study.

Predictably, my study and research did not uncover the ultimate cause of our Vietnam failure. However, it did serve as a springboard for analysis of one of the major contributing factors -- the absence of a soldier/statesman. In fact, as my exploration of this issue progressed, it became clear that an indepth look at the subject of the soldier/statesman warrants more time and effort. My hypothesis was that the soldier/statesman is an integral and vital part of any national decisionmaking team. Bearing this in mind, a better effort must be made to prepare future senior leadership in the military for this developmentally difficult role. The subject must be examined from all angles.

I'll approach the study of this concept by first defining the term soldier/statesman. Then, in terms of important background information, I'll take a look at the evolution of the soldier/statesman. In doing this, I'll cite examples of politically astute leaders who have earned this appellation. I'll also bring forth some examples of leaders who, to their detriment, failed to earn or sustain this title. Rooted in my initial premise for this study, I'll then compare and contrast the role of the soldier/statesman in our two most recent major military undertakings -- Vietnam and the Persian Gulf War. Finally, and probably most importantly, I'll finish up with some answers to questions that spring from my hypothesis:

-- How important is the soldier/statesman in our emerging and ever changing world?

-- Where do we go from here? What can we do to continue to emphasize, nurture and provide opportunities for the growth of soldier/statesmen?

## **SOLDIER/STATESMAN DEFINED**

A soldier/statesman is a senior military leader who excels in the political/military arena. While this definition may be accurate, it is too simplistic. It shrouds more important questions -- What is the overall make-up of the soldier/statesman? What makes him different from other senior military leaders?

Identifying the make-up of the soldier/statesman in concrete terms is difficult. The following quote from Howard Means' biography of Gen. Colin Powell serves as a jumping off point for attempting to corral a term that generally defies confinement.

" . . . From that same neighborhood, his friend and fellow New Yorker Kenneth Duberstein says, Powell also carried away "street smarts" -- the kind of tough, intense survival course in human nature that is offered free of tuition in the inner city."

"He understands people. He understands what motivates people, what they like and don't like. He has something that makes his nose twitch if things don't smell exactly right, if the aroma is wrong."<sup>1</sup>

A core ingredient -- superseding any other trait in degree of importance -- of any soldier/statesman is an extraordinary understanding of human nature. As Duberstein, later a member of the Reagan White House also, vividly relates, this understanding is wrapped in a keen instinct for what motivates -- what people like or dislike. It is akin to a rare sixth sense. An ability to perceive or "smell" people problems before they become too big to solve permeates the character of the soldier/statesman.

Another great soldier/statesman of the twentieth century also possessed this trait. As with Gen. Powell, Gen. George Marshall understood people. This incident, as reported by Mrs. Marshall in Edgar Puryear's work 19 Stars, clearly illustrates this point:

" . . . Once, while watching him inspect troops at Fort Knox, she noticed that he went

quickly through two lines of men and then paused to talk for several minutes with a soldier in the rear line.

"I asked why he had picked out that particular soldier," Mrs. Marshall wrote, "and he replied, 'I caught the man's eye and I knew something was wrong. I wanted to find out what'."

"Did you find out?" she asked.

"Yes," he answered, "everything was wrong. The man ought never to have been drafted. He was over-age, had a large family, and was in no physical condition for active service. He was a good soldier too, wanted to do his part . . . The Draft Board made a slip-up on that fellow. Arrangements were made that very day to send the soldier back to his family."<sup>2</sup>

However, a superb understanding of human nature does not alone qualify one as a soldier/statesman. The soldier/statesman must also be technically competent. Furthermore, he must understand and study the increasingly complex arenas that he must work in. This includes the internal environment (military channels) and the more difficult external environment (non-military factions, like the State Department and Executive Branch) that senior military leaders interact with increasingly more often as they progress. Combining these skills and knowledge, and underpinning them with a superior understanding of human nature, we have a senior leader prepared to tackle the challenges of soldier/statesmanship.

However, there is another piece to the puzzle. To prepare and effectively separate the soldier/statesman of tomorrow from the pack, they must be given the appropriate opportunities, experiences and education as they rise through the ranks.

Granted the God-given extraordinary sense for human nature and afforded the opportunities, experiences and education to apply and further develop this talent, the soldier/statesman will possess the tools to conquer the critical problems of our time. Formidable challenges loom. But they are not unlike others in history. The next segment will take a look at the evolution of the soldier/statesman and shed more light on the make-up and importance of this increasingly integral member of the national decisionmaking structure.

## SOLDIER/STATESMAN OR NOT?

Who are the soldier/statesmen of history? Much can be learned from studying these figures. Their actions and accomplishments can be contemporized to give us a solid foundation for understanding this concept. In many ways, a look at this evolution will serve us well in doing what we can to ensure our soldier/statesmen of the future are given appropriate opportunities to mature and emerge, both individually and within our system.

The examples studied herein are not only positive stories. In some cases, it is instructive to look at leaders who possessed all the tools to go down in history as great soldier/statesmen, but were derailed for one reason or another.

Many figures jump out in the study of the evolution of the soldier/statesman. For our purposes, I'll look at four men: Alexander the Great, Napoleon, Gen. Douglas MacArthur, and Gen. Dwight Eisenhower. These different leaders span the ages, and all lend something different to the understanding of the soldier/statesman.

### ALEXANDER THE GREAT

The following passage about Alexander is taken from Ancient and Medieval Warfare by Elmer May, Gerald Stadler and John Votaw:

"Eleven consecutive years of unremitting campaigning is an incredible achievement. It is a saga of conquest filled with action of every kind and description -- battles, sieges, burning deserts, icy mountains, and swollen rivers. Certainly every problem known to man must have presented itself for Alexander's solution in his travels of over 20,000 miles."<sup>3</sup>

As these authors certify, Alexander is rightfully renowned as one of the greatest warriors of all time. What is less celebrated in the recapitulations of Alexander's endeavors is his great talent as a statesman. This is the talent that takes him from warrior to status as a Great Captain -- a true soldier/statesman.

With war significantly more brutal and a much more common tool of foreign policy than in



modern times, he demonstrated considerable restraint. This restraint gave credence to his understanding and respect for the importance of statesmanship in achieving his strategic goals. The objective of his conquests was to achieve victory in as bloodless a fashion as he could because he realized that this would be beneficial in winning over the Persian people. Defeating the Persian army was his military goal. Winning over the Persian people was his political goal.<sup>4</sup>

Long before Clausewitz would write, "at its highest point strategy borders on political science, or rather . . . the two become one."<sup>5</sup>, Alexander put this theory into practice. Speaking of Alexander's early battles against King Darius, the orator Polybius XVIII is quoted in J.F.C. Fuller's The Generalship of Alexander the Great:

" . . . they had been prompt to war against each other in the open field, and to do everything they could to conquer each other in arms, but had spared the cities, that they might rule them if they conquered, and be honoured by their subjects. But that a man should abandon war, and yet destroy that for which the war was undertaken, seemed an act of madness, and madness of a very violent sort."<sup>6</sup>

Alexander deftly accomplished his political goal of winning over the Persian people. His eleven year campaign throughout vast stretches of Asia Minor would not have been possible without the successful display of statesmanship he exhibited over the conquered territories. He understood human nature. He realized that once the enemy's army was conquered, his only hope for continuance of his campaign was to pursue a policy that pacified and did not antagonize the Persian people. As exemplified by the following passage from Fuller's work, history records Alexander's vast success in this matter:

"It is important to remember that the means Alexander used to make secure the more important bases, that covered extensive territories, were more political than military. Their administration was carefully organized, peaceful conditions were restored, trade was stimulated, and the garrisons left in them were police forces and colonists rather than armies of occupation. As his conquests extended, his empire progressively took form; he won his peace as he waged his war."<sup>7</sup>

Alexander's certification as a soldier/statesman brings to bear two facts applicable to a contemporary discussion of this issue. First, the obvious fact is that the concept of the soldier/statesman is timeless. Alexander, though more prominent than most, is one of many great

leaders of ancient history who can claim distinction as soldier/statesmen. In fact, until about the middle of the nineteenth century, military and political leadership were generally married very tightly, facilitating the emergence of prominent soldier/statesmen. The second point of note concerning Alexander is really an amplification of the previous sentence. Alexander's example points to the changing context of the environment from which the soldier/statesman must emerge. Samuel Huntington gives a good account of this relatively recent transformation in his book The Soldier and the State:

" . . . The emergence of the officer corps as an autonomous professional body cannot, of course, be given any precise dates. It was gradual and faltering. Two facts, however, stand out. Prior to 1800 there was no such thing as a professional officer corps. In 1900 such bodies existed in virtually all major countries.

The emergence of a professional officer corps created the modern problem of civil-military relations in Europe and North America . . . The cleavage between the military and civilian spheres and the resulting tension between the two are phenomena of distinctly recent origin."<sup>8</sup>

Developing soldier/statesmen in today's complex world is certainly a challenge -- probably more troublesome than in Alexander's time. Therefore, it becomes even more important to study past Great Captains to glean all we can from their experiences and legacies as they rose to status as soldier/statesmen.

## NAPOLEON

Napoleon is another good, yet difficult, study of a soldier/statesman. Clearly, with the inertia following the French revolution as his catalyst, he appeared to apply the defining traits of a soldier/statesman to mobilize and motivate an entire country. A wave of nationalism rapidly spread throughout France. Napoleon was attuned to this mood and accurately translated this new internal attitude into success. Though certainly not averse to self aggrandizement, Napoleon was also a devoted servant to his people and his country, in touch with the mood of his people and perpetually striving for the good of the whole. This thought is capsulized in the following discussion of his

political aims from J.F.C. Fuller's A Military History of the Western World:

"The first was to make France orderly, prosperous, and above all glorious, and the second -- its derivative induced by the opposition of England -- to establish a universal empire in the form of a league of kingdoms under the aegis of France. The foundations of the first were laid when he became First Consul and during the Peace of Amiens, when, in order to consolidate his gains, undertake great public works, initiate great legal and social reforms, and stimulate science, art and industry -- in short, close the abyss created by the Revolution -- he earnestly wished for peace. Yet, as we have seen, the clash between his protectionist policy and England's need for trading made peace impossible."<sup>9</sup>

Forever revered by his countrymen, it is in the external realm that Napoleon demonstrates a lack of political astuteness that brings into question his status as a soldier/statesman. Especially in his latter years of power, he completely neglected the motivations and political desires of those nations aligned against him, as well as those he'd conquered. This neglect led to his demise. In this regard, his failure as a soldier/statesman is described quite well in Albert Sidney Britt's, The Wars of

#### Napoleon:

"Changes in warfare in Napoleon's time accompanied the abrupt transformation of European society. Napoleon earned his fame because he observed, understood, and exploited those changing forces. However, he ultimately fell from power by disregarding the potential of revolutionary change in other countries and in their armies."<sup>10</sup>

Napoleon's exploits demonstrate how transitory the abilities of the soldier/statesman can be. Diligent and sustained study of the internal and external environments is a requirement for the soldier/statesman. In Napoleon's case, early successes led to megalomaniacal behavior. His ego came to overshadow what had previously been exceptional skills as a soldier/statesman.

#### MACARTHUR

General Douglas MacArthur is certainly a revered and controversial figure in twentieth-century history. His rise to prominence occurred through irrefutable competence, sheer charismatic force and a level of self-confidence and self-promotion rarely matched in history. However, within the bounds of the definition of the soldier/statesman, he never fully measures up. His unique style of leadership

sustained him much longer than one would expect, but eventually led to disaster and an historical legacy far less complimentary than he deserves.

Manifestations of MacArthur's enormous ego surfaced early in his career. As the youngest Superintendent of the Military Academy, he brashly, and correctly, made changes to the academic curriculum. But, in doing so, he completely alienated most of the entrenched faculty and influential alumni.<sup>11</sup> This incident is an harbinger of further struggles with the basic tenets of a soldier/statesman. It exemplifies his clear struggle to integrate his understanding of the human being into his leadership actions in both the internal and external environments.

Enigmatic to an extreme, MacArthur demonstrated high degrees of statesmanship during some of his high profile public life. As the virtual dictator of post-war Japan, he deftly handled his responsibilities, running one of the fairest military occupations in history.<sup>12</sup> Also, his actions in the Philippines prior to World War II certainly reflect skills as a soldier/statesman. However, his all too public dispute with President Truman over policy during the Korean War served as the *coup de grace* in the triumph of his tremendous ego over his place in history as a true soldier/statesman. As elucidated in this passage from the article "General of the Army Douglas C. MacArthur" contained in The War Lords: Military Commanders of the Twentieth Century, MacArthur's yearn for the spotlight defeated his loyalty to his leader and his country:

"In December 1950, and again in early 1951, Truman issued general orders that no one in government service should make a statement on foreign policy without clearing it with the State Department. The orders were obviously aimed at MacArthur. It was to a certain extent a muzzling, but nearly every member of the armed forces thought MacArthur had gone too far in his public disagreements. As a professional soldier he obviously had a duty to disagree with the administration when he thought it was wrong, but his criticism -- most people felt -- would have been more effective and listened to more closely if he had made it privately."<sup>13</sup>

What can we learn from the MacArthur legacy as we explore and contemporize the discussion of the soldier/statesman? In the 1979 work, Inchon Landing, Michael Langley says:

"The criterion of a great soldier, beside a complete mastery of his skill, is that ultimately he propagates the civilization for which von Clausewitz's politicians strove

in vain. Alexander the Great propagated the teachings of his own tutor, Aristotle, and Napoleon (albeit the ultimate military loser) redefined a law and a purpose for France. Alexander died at 33, Napoleon's military career ended when he was 46, and MacArthur's at 70. His most outstanding work, of course, was in the Pacific; his methods were so unorthodox that his legacy, at this close proximity, is still elusive."<sup>14</sup>

Langley's assertion is correct. MacArthur's legacy is still unclear. Many argue that, despite his transgressions, he reigns as a soldier/statesman -- after all he propagated a democratic way of life in post-war Japan. Unfortunately, I think this characterization is too kind. Despite a successful stint of statesmanship in Japan, MacArthur regularly failed to display an appropriate level of political astuteness at various points throughout his career. His lack of political astuteness reinforces a lesson that must be emphasized in the contemporary debate of the soldier/statesman -- political astuteness is a cornerstone in the make-up of the soldier/statesman. Furthermore, MacArthur's runaway ego set the stage for a public debate over civil/military relationships that negatively influenced military history for the next forty years. There were two soldier/statesmen that emerged in this era, but Douglas MacArthur was not one of them.

## EISENHOWER

While MacArthur fails to qualify as a soldier/statesman, models for this concept emerged in the persons of Gen. Dwight Eisenhower and Gen. George Marshall. For brevity's sake, I'll only chronicle Eisenhower's evolution and methodology as he achieved status as one of our greatest contemporary soldier/statesmen.

Eisenhower understood the importance and critical role of the soldier/statesman. In a speech delivered to the National War College on October 30, 1950 while he was President of Columbia University, he framed and emphasized this point:

"In this particular school there is an attempt to produce some thing akin to what we would call soldier-statesmen; in other words, a soldier or a service man, no matter what his branch of the Service, who is not limited in his thinking to mere professional considerations, but who

starts out with the statement "The security of the United States is my guiding light," and then he searches out and thinks upon every possible activity, every possible thing that can affect that security. Not always does he have the responsibility for action, of course, but he still can not escape the personal responsibility of thinking about those things and adjusting his own professional ideas accordingly."<sup>15</sup>

Eisenhower epitomized this portrayal of the soldier/statesman. Given the daunting task of bringing together the allied forces as Supreme Commander during World War II, he proved invincible. He capitalized on his superior understanding of human nature to magnificently maneuver through the many obstacles in both his internal and external environments, eventually leading the Allied powers to one of history's finest victories.

In 19 Stars, Eugene Puryear has this to say about Eisenhower's task and subsequent performance:

"The role of the Supreme Commander called for a unique set of qualities. A soldier, trained to command and obey without question, often sees issues only in black and white, and performs according to established rules. The diplomat or statesman must have an open, flexible mind, accomplishing his mission through persuasion and the compromise of conflicting national interest. General Eisenhower was able, on occasion, to call upon the attributes of both soldier and statesman."<sup>16</sup>

As Puryear states, Eisenhower displayed aplomb across the spectrum of operations. His handling of his brilliant, but often unruly, subordinate commanders (Field Marshall Montgomery and Gen. George Patton included) was superb. His dealings in the political realm with Churchill, President Roosevelt, and others reflect skills of the most accomplished statesman. Equally important but probably least publicized, his relationship with the troops in the field was one of unrelenting mutual respect and admiration. Senator Homer Capehart had this to say about Eisenhower after accompanying him on one of his many trips to visit the troops on the battle lines, "He's got what it takes. I can see now why the GIs worship him. He speaks their language; he isn't high hat like you expect from brass, and he knows their problems and they know it."<sup>17</sup>

What do we draw from the Eisenhower model for the discussion of the soldier/statesman in today's debate? As might be expected, the lessons are plentiful. Ike's competence, attained through

years of hard work and preparation, is legendary and obviously a requisite quality for any soldier/statesman. Opportunities, experiences, and education presented themselves, and in every instance, Ike took full advantage of them. From graduating first in the 1926 class of the Army's Command and General Staff School to experiences working closely with Gen. Douglas MacArthur and Gen. Fox Conner, Eisenhower exploited each and every juncture of his professional life to gain the maximum benefit. This manifested itself in his knowledge of military strategy as well as his development of keen interpersonal skills.

Perhaps one of the most salient lessons to be gleaned from the Eisenhower experience is that of opportunity -- favorable circumstances of time and place to exhibit your skills. If George Marshall had been selected for the Supreme Commander position, as was widely postulated at the time, Eisenhower would have never emerged as a model soldier/statesman. In all likelihood, he would never have become the 34th President of the United States. In any given era, there are several potential soldier/statesmen who are never presented the circumstances to test their mettle. Ike was ready when he was called. The country's conflict in Vietnam presents a contrasting view.

## **VIETNAM AND THE GULF WAR COMPARED**

Sometimes the absence of something helps define that something. This is the case with soldier/statesmen and the Vietnam War.

### **VIETNAM**

Many have suggested that the absence of a soldier/statesman is a major reason for the disastrous results of this conflict. Was this absence precipitated by hesitance on the part of military leaders to assert their thoughts because of the MacArthur experience? Was it, as Doug Kinnard asserts in The Certain Trumpet, a diminished influence on policy matters that evolved from the Eisenhower

presidency, where Ike "thoroughly dominated the civilian relationship with the military?"<sup>18</sup> In any regard, the influence and voice of senior military leadership virtually vanished in the early 1960s. No military leader of the time had the political astuteness or moral courage to rise above whatever hurdles beset them and influence outcomes significantly.

In his study of the Vietnam war, On Strategy, Harry Summers amplifies this point nicely:

"In the spring of 1980, a reporter for one of the country's leading newspapers asked an Army War College faculty panel what he believed to be a key question about the Vietnam War. "How many times did the Chairman of the JCS demand to see the President?" The answer he received, "Almost never," was distressing enough, but it would have been more disturbing if he had asked the question in another way -- not how many times did the Chairman demand to see the President, but the more important question of how many times did the President demand to see the Chairman, or any other uniformed military advisors . . . It would appear that our civilian leadership in the Pentagon, the White House, and in the Congress evidently believed the military professionals had no worthwhile advice to give."<sup>19</sup>

Could a politically astute soldier/statesman have made a difference during the policy debates shrouding the Vietnam War? Yes. In fact, General Maxwell Taylor, more than others, had several opportunities.

After serving as Army Chief of Staff during the Eisenhower presidency, Taylor retired in 1959, somewhat dejected at failing to achieve many of his goals due to reduced defense budgets. His failures, however, did highlight and catalyze defense issues as one of the major political battlegrounds in the 1960 Presidential election. Owing much to Taylor for his efforts in this debate, President Kennedy, and later President Johnson, relied on Taylor to fill some of the loftiest Vietnam policy positions within their administrations. He was the first and only Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff to be recalled from the retired ranks to serve in the position. He followed his tour as Chairman by moving on to be the Ambassador to Vietnam, and followed this one year ambassadorship by remaining close to the President for the next four years as a special consultant on the war.

Obviously, Maxwell Taylor was in a position to make a difference in the Vietnam War. Unfortunately, he failed. Gen. Bruce Palmer in his book The 25-Year War echoes a question worth



repeating:

"Clearly Taylor not only knew the problems and pitfalls but also was in a position to wield great influence. The nagging question, though, remains -- why was he not more successful in bringing about a sounder strategic approach to the war?"<sup>20</sup>

Kinnard brings forth an answer in The Certain Trumpet. Of Taylor, he says: "He was more soldier than statesman."<sup>21</sup> In critical times where the soldier/statesman's views were mandatory, Taylor exhibited what has been described as a typical bureaucratic proclivity of many military senior leaders - a failure to stand up and be counted when in the minority.<sup>22</sup>

Equally important, his influential positions and his personality -- characterized once by the term "cold potato"<sup>23</sup> -- surely inhibited other senior military leaders of the time. This was especially true during the early years of U.S. involvement, where a policy of gradual escalation is generally blamed for the resultant "quagmire" of the late 60s and early 70s. This March 1965 exchange concerning a movement of Marines (as related by Gen. Westmoreland) illustrates Taylor's power and influence over prominent military leaders of the day:

". . . . "Do you know my terms of reference," Ambassador Taylor demanded sharply, "and that I have authority over you?" "I understand fully," I replied, "and I appreciate it completely, Mr. Ambassador."<sup>24</sup>

Following Taylor's example, the inclination not to voice a dissenting minority opinion with civilian leadership was prevalent throughout the ranks of senior military leadership of this era. This fact, coupled with Taylor's inadequacies as a soldier/statesman, unwittingly formed a team best described as a recipe for disaster. Indeed, disastrous results followed.

Recognizing the poisonous results of this recipe, steps were taken following the war to rectify the problems. They paid off nicely in our next major conflict -- the Persian Gulf War.

## VIETNAM: LESSONS LEARNED / GULF WAR: LESSONS APPLIED

Major changes occurred after the painful lessons of the Vietnam War. All of these changes improved the climate for development and emergence of the soldier/statesman. Three particular changes are especially noteworthy.

### *Political/Military Arena*

First, within the military, there was greater emphasis placed in training our senior leaders in the political/military environment. Curriculums at Senior Service Schools were revamped with an eye toward better preparing senior military leaders for their eventual interaction with high level senior civilian leaders -- the external environment.<sup>25</sup>

Additionally, opportunities for practical experience in the external environment seemed to increase for senior military leaders. Gen. Al Haig and Gen. Colin Powell were prominent post-Vietnam military leaders who garnered great educations through positions in the external environment. These experiences paid dividends.

The military also increased its participation in programs sponsored by the civilian sector. The White House Fellowship Program is an example. President Lyndon Johnson launched this program in 1964. Associate director Phyllis Byrne says that, the program is designed to expose young decisionmakers to the decisionmaking environment at the highest levels of government ". . . early in their careers so they take what they learned back to their respective communities."<sup>26</sup> Many prominent Americans have participated, including our country's latest soldier/statesman, Gen. Colin Powell.

### *Jointness*

The second noteworthy change from the Vietnam experience was the birth of growing concern for joint service training. This concern reached a feverish pitch after the successful, yet

awkward, Grenada operation of 1983. However, the genesis of the concern certainly originated from the Vietnam experience.

Emphasis on jointness has greatly enhanced cooperation between services and improved interaction within the internal environment. As Harry Summers points out in On Strategy II: A Critical Analysis of the Gulf War, Vietnam made it clear that "no matter how well the troops performed at the tactical level on the battlefield, it was all for naught if the strategies and grand tactics were faulty."<sup>27</sup> The missing link to tie together the strategies and tactics was a mature joint service warfighting mentality at the highest levels.

It was in the realm of grand tactics that the military's post-Vietnam analysis concluded there was indeed a vacuous deficiency of jointness. Instances like the following cited in Peter Arnett's recent book, Live From the Battlefield, were far too common and highlight this issue:

"This is the first war where the infantry has supported the air and artillery," a First (Cavalry) Division company commander told me after a frustrating action where his unit had waited for hours for tactical air support and lost track of the enemy."<sup>28</sup>

Emanating from observations like this, concepts in grand tactics such as the AirLand Battle doctrine grew. Thus, a shifting mindset for military operations was born -- a shift away from parochial service paradigms toward the concept of joint operations. However, the evolution of joint thinking has been an iterative, and sometimes slow, process. Justifiably, Congress stepped in to move joint thinking along at a faster pace. The revolutionary Goldwater-Nichols Act of 1986 officially legislated the importance of jointness into our military and will likely go down as one of military history's most important pieces of legislation. The development of our military's joint operating concepts continues to evolve today, and the importance of this newly emphasized way of fighting battles cannot be overstated.

Consequently, it is obvious that the soldier/statesman of tomorrow cannot master his internal environment without sufficient exposure and training in joint positions and operations. As the Gulf

War illustrated, success in modern conflict is incumbent on developing leaders who can lead in the joint service arena. Keying in on the impact of the Goldwater-Nichols Act on the Gulf War, Harry Summers writes:

"The result was that when the Persian Gulf crisis erupted three years later, there was a pool of trained joint service staff officers on hand, and the military's chain of command had been purged of its arteriosclerosis."<sup>29</sup>

### *Civil/Military Relationships*

The third notable change emanating from the Vietnam conflict was role clarity for civilian and military leaders. Specifically, we recognized the great interdependence of civilian and military policymakers. This pertained particularly to the decisionmaking process leading to involvement in war and the actual prosecution of war. At the heart of this change was the strengthening of the position of the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff through the Goldwater-Nichols Act of 1986. The transformed civil/military relationship, more than anything else, proved its worth in the Gulf War. Whereas Vietnam remains an American disaster, the Gulf War was one of our more defining triumphs. The revamped civil/military relationship and the emergence of a politically astute soldier/statesman were critical ingredients in this success story. This passage from On Strategy II puts these newly defined relationships in perspective:

"Secretary of Defense Cheney proved to be a Godsend, among the best Secretaries of Defense to occupy that position since its creation in 1947 . . . . He and General Powell . . . . worked together hand-in-glove like an old Army Company Commander and first sergeant to guide, support, and control the leaders in the field.

For his part General Powell reprised the role of General George Marshall and Admiral Ernest King in World War II, working closely with his civilian superiors and providing strategic direction to the field commander without attempting to micromanage the war. As a result of this unity of command General Schwarzkopf was able to play General Eisenhower. "Operation Desert Storm was certainly the classic example of a multi-service operation," he (Schwarzkopf) later observed, "a truly joint operation."<sup>30</sup>

## THE PERSIAN GULF WAR

The soldier/statesman Colin Powell was the linchpin to our success in the Gulf -- the missing ingredient from our Vietnam experience. He was a leadership product of our Vietnam "lessons learned", and his talents were unleashed by the Goldwater-Nichols Act. His innate understanding of human nature, his extensive training and exposure to problem solving and decisionmaking within military channels, as well as in the external environment, manifested themselves in the preeminent role he played in winning the Gulf War. In Vietnam, McNamara and Westmoreland filled the same role as Cheney and Schwarzkopf did in the Gulf, but nowhere do we see the equal of Colin Powell in the Vietnam saga. Nobody stepped up to fill the critical role as the link between military and civilian leadership. Thus, the point becomes clear -- soldier/statesmen are a necessity. Gen. Colin Powell and the contrasting conduct of the Vietnam and Gulf Wars etch this fact into history.

The question now becomes how do we perpetuate and sustain soldier/statesmen within our system? As we've already seen through the examples of World War II, Vietnam, and the Gulf War, the soldier/statesman is a precious commodity that can come and go as easy as day turns to night.

## **SOLDIER/STATESMAN FOR TOMORROW**

In a 1992 study titled U.S. Army War College 2000: Army Senior Officer Education, the Army War College asked active duty general officers: What skills/knowledge do you feel senior officers will need in the next 5 to 15 years? One respondent replied, "Statesmanship; political acumen; knowledge of technological developments and their application to training missions, national defense, warfighting and peacekeeping are among the skills and knowledge needed."<sup>31</sup>

Analyzing this reply, two points present themselves. First, regarding the need for technological knowledge and application, it becomes apparent that this is a factually-based realm to which there are generally concrete answers. Mechanisms are widely available within our system to

garner technological data and examine its wide-ranging application. On the other hand, gaining skills and knowledge in statesmanship and political acumen is much more difficult. Our system is not "user friendly" when it comes to this issue. In fact, it could also be argued that the military culture tends to reward the technocrat vice the statesman, thus making it even more difficult to cultivate these skills. One thing is clear -- tomorrow's military and tomorrow's United States needs soldiers adept at statesmanship.

We must take measures to train and develop these types of leaders. To do this, a basic understanding of the complex, demanding environment of military senior leadership is required. To frame the conceptual complexity of the senior leader's environment and offer up specific proposals to enhance development of future soldier/statesmen, a discussion of the three "pillars" of leader development is appropriate.<sup>32</sup> Each of these pillars -- self-development, institutional training, and operational assignments -- must be touched by systemic changes to better prepare our soldier/statesmen of tomorrow for the challenges they will face.

### SELF-DEVELOPMENT

The study and examination of senior leadership development is really in its infancy. Pioneers in this field like Dr. Elliot Jacques and Dr. T. Owen Jacobs did not emerge until the 1970s. Since this time, however, there has been a firestorm of research. Not unlike other research at a comparable early stage, the concepts, problem areas and definitions involved in senior leadership development are now becoming clear; but, the application of this knowledge is lagging. What seems apparent, though, is that the realm of self-development offers our military system and its leaders a big opportunity for positive change from this research. The newly developed Strategic Leader Development Inventory (SLDI) is one possible tool to bridge this gap.

## SLDI

Using something called Stratified Systems Theory, a tool that describes increasing complexity as the leader moves up in the organization, and Stage Theory, an adult maturity index, as its theoretical foundation, SLDI is a potentially sound and highly beneficial breakthrough in advancing senior leader development. Developed by the Army Research Institute, Auburn University, the Industrial College of the Armed Forces (ICAF) and the Army War College, the SLDI was:

"... developed to give you a clear look at yourself -- as seen by your former superiors, peers, and subordinates -- on several factors that have been found critical to senior leader effectiveness. In addition, comparing their view of you with your view of yourself on these factors will tell you whether you have blind spots and how significant they may be."<sup>33</sup>

To administer this tool, questionnaires are distributed in equal numbers to superiors, peers, and subordinates. Measurement is centered on factors that fall into three different categories: conceptual skills and attributes, positive attributes, and negative attributes. Several sub-areas under the three categories are individually rated (See Figure 1).

SLDI FACTORS	
<i>Factors</i>	<i>Source</i>
<b>Conceptual Skills and Attributes</b>	
Conceptual Flexibility	Superiors, Peers, Self
Political Sensibility	Superiors, Peers, Self
Long Term Perspective	Superiors
Quick Study/Perceptive	Peers
Complex Understanding	Subordinates
<b>Positive Attributes</b>	
Empowering Subordinates	Superiors, Peers, Subordinates, Self
Strong Work Ethic	Superiors, Subordinates, Self
Personal Objectivity	Subordinates, Self
Team Performance Facilitation	Peers
Personal Toughness	Subordinates
<b>Negative Attributes</b>	
Technical Incompetence	Superiors, Peers, Subordinates, Self
Explosive, Abusive	Superiors, Peers, Subordinates, Self
Arrogant/Self-Serving/Ineffective	Superiors, Peers, Subordinates, Self
Rigid/Micromanages	Superiors, Peers, Self
Inaccessible	Subordinates

FIGURE 1

STRATEGIC LEADER DEVELOPMENT INVENTORY

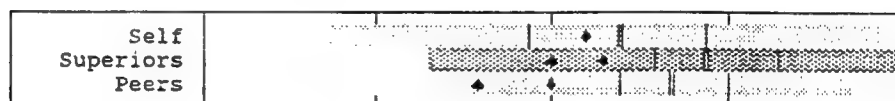
### Conceptual Skills and Attributes

**Scored:**

**FACTORS:**

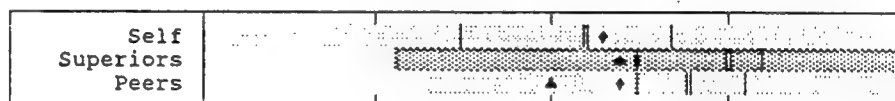
Raw Scores:      ←Below Average      Better Than Most      The Best →  
1 ..... 2 ..... 3 ..... 4 ..... 5

## CONCEPTUAL FLEXIBILITY



Raw Scores: 1 . . . . . 2 . . . . . 3 . . . . . 4 . . . . . 5

POLITICAL SENSIBILITY



Raw Scores: 1 . . . . . 2 . . . . . 3 . . . . . 4 . . . . . 5

### LONG TERM PERSPECTIVE



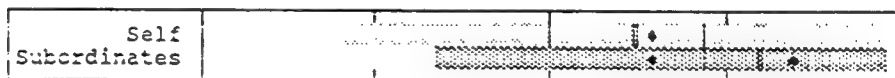
Raw Scores: 1 . . . . . 2 . . . . . 3 . . . . . 4 . . . . . 5

### QUICK STUDY/PERCEPTIVE



Raw Scores: 1 . . . . . 2 . . . . . 3 . . . . . 4 . . . . . 5

COMPLEX UNDERSTANDING



♦ = Self    ♠ = Others    | = 25% or 75%    || = 50%    ▨ = Range

20



### *Applicability*

Today's environment of Total Quality Management (TQM) cries for a feedback tool of this nature -- where those who are being empowered more and more in the decision process voice their feelings about their leadership in a clear and unfettered manner. Indeed, this is valuable to subordinates and peers who rate the subject leader. However, the greatest value of SLDI lies in the fact that it provides a rare chance for senior leadership to receive structured feedback from parties generally only able to give feedback in an informal setting. In a presentation at the Army War College's Strategic Leadership Conference in February 1991, Dr. Dave Campbell, a Senior Fellow at the Center for Creative Leadership, shed some light on this thought when he said: "The basic assumption is that the opinions and attitudes of those led are relevant data for evaluating the performance of the leader."<sup>34</sup>

A recurrent theme throughout our entire discussion of the soldier/statesmen of history is their understanding of the human being. Inherent in the understanding of the human being is a desire and ability to listen to the people around you -- a desire, an ability to fight for feedback. This ability certainly benefitted Colin Powell, George Marshall and Dwight Eisenhower. Examples abound, throughout their careers, of their extraordinary efforts to go out among their superiors, peers, and subordinates and informally gather feedback, with the ultimate goal being to enhance their ability to deal with the conceptually complex environments they were working in.

SLDI complements this style. It is another effective way to gather feedback for the leader. It is direct and more formal than interaction with "the troops". A mix of informal and formal feedback is imperative. Formal feedback, especially from subordinates, is rare. SLDI fills this void. It is revolutionary because not only does it provide feedback on important interpersonal factors but it explores the conceptual abilities of the leader -- something deemed too tough to do previously and something that is critical for our soldier/statesmen of tomorrow.

## *Institutionalizing*

Institutionalizing an SLDI-like measurement would not prove too difficult. Several studies have already made similar proposals to this effect. In a 1993 study, Measuring Up: A Systemic Technology for Developing Leaders, LTC Mike McGee addressed the military's current leadership development process, saying "Based on the empirical evidence, maybe the current system should not endure. Maybe it needs to advance -- rapidly."<sup>35</sup> He goes on to propose making peer and subordinate ratings a permanent part of a leader's records.

The thesis of McGee's comprehensive study is on target -- we do need a more systematic method of measuring and developing leaders. However, if we are to enable soldier/statesmen of tomorrow to fully develop, I think a more measured pace to change is advisable and prudent. Consequently, I propose that SLDI-type measurements should be administered on all O-6 and higher leaders (individuals responsible for an organization with 100 or more personnel) once a year. The results of the SLDI should be delivered to the leader for his review only. In the end, this approach may prove more productive.

This proposal may not produce distinctly tangible results. But, it will help senior leaders to continue to develop. The soldier/statesmen of tomorrow will gain valuable insight into their own abilities. They can use this information to continue to enhance their cognitive skills and leadership style. The ICAF Decisionmaking Course syllabus correctly states: "Your growth in the critical five-year period following your ICAF year will be mostly self-directed."<sup>36</sup> Institutionalizing the SLDI process as proposed will channel this self growth more appropriately. The result will be a soldier/statesman better prepared to deal with the conceptually complex internal and external environments of the future.

## INSTITUTIONAL TRAINING

The second pillar of leadership development is institutional training. Institutional training in the military can be broadly defined as formal classes that soldiers attend to learn and grow in their soldiering abilities. These training sessions run the gamut, from basic military training to flying training schools to professional military education (PME). In the development of soldier/statesmen, the highest echelons of institutional training are the most important.

The final, and highest, training ground for most soldier/statesmen is a one year tour at one of five institutions -- the Industrial College of the Armed Forces, National War College, Air War College, Army War College or Navy War College. The following passage discussing the War College experience from a speech by General Eisenhower is descriptive and incisive:

"I think there is no activity more important in a man's preparation for war than his periodic return to school duty, not so much because of what he learns in mere facts and knowledge as because during that period he is relieved of the ordinary routine duty . . . . For that period he is given an opportunity to think, to think in terms of war, without limit upon the scope of his ideas."<sup>37</sup>

Clearly, as Eisenhower said, this is a valuable experience that must be preserved at all costs. More innovative and integrated programs in terms of structural and curriculum changes are needed, however, to keep up with our fast paced world.

### *Integration and Need for Improvement*

In their thought-provoking work, War and Anti-War, futurists Alvin and Heidi Toffler say: "The growing complexity of the military lends heavier-than-ever significance to the term 'integration'."<sup>38</sup> While the context of their statement is directed more toward the technology arena, I think it is equally appropriate in a discussion of leader development.

Institutional training at higher levels must deal with integration -- a more integrative approach in terms of service jointness and greater integration of material generally reserved for study in graduate

schools outside the military. This integration is mandatory to address the growing complexity of the world and the commensurately increased complexity of the Profession of Arms. As depicted in the following passage from their book, the Tofflers' concept of war and anti-war in our future society gives us a glimpse of the type of vision we will inculcate into higher level institutional training experiences through more integrated programs.

"But while wars actual, potential, and vicarious shape our existence, there is a completely forgotten reverse reality. For every one of our lives has also been shaped by wars that were NOT fought, that were prevented because "anti-wars" were won . . . Today, as the world hurtles out of the industrial age and into a new century, much of what we know about both war and anti-war is dangerously out of date. A revolutionary new economy is arising based on knowledge, rather than conventional raw materials and physical labor. This remarkable change in the world economy is bringing with it parallel revolution in the nature of warfare. . . . What is missing is not more emotive expression but a fresh understanding of the relations between war and a fast-changing society."<sup>39</sup>

Standard, stereotyped pattern of instruction must be broken. Future soldier/statesmen must be taken to higher conceptual levels of thinking through the War College experience.

### *Proposals for Improvement*

Bouncing Ike's statement off Tofflers' ideas, it is clear that the soldier/statesman of tomorrow must be given the chance to spend time visualizing where we are and where we are going in our ever-complex universe. To do this, they must be well versed in the external environment -- political, economic, and social issues of the day as well as associated implications for the future. Additionally, they must be thoroughly adept at working in their internal environment -- now a rapidly developing "joint service arena". The Senior Service College experience must satisfy these taskings. Two specific proposals come to mind to aid this endeavor.

First, and very simply, the time has come for all of these military institutions of higher learning to become totally joint colleges with integrated joint curriculums. The day of separate institutions at this level to specifically concentrate on air, ground, or sea warfare has passed. Service

specific doctrine is important and should be taught. But this should occur at a lower level of institutional training, preferably each service's intermediate service school. Maintaining service specific war colleges actually thwarts the integration of jointness into the military culture. Future soldier/statesmen attending war college need to be afforded every chance possible to associate with as many peers as possible from other services and to think in terms of grand national strategy uninhibited by service parochialism. Elimination of the Army, Navy, and Air War Colleges and establishment of 3-5 joint institutions such as National War College and ICAF will improve the conceptual and cognitive skills, as well as broaden the experiences, of the soldier/statesman of tomorrow. This change will not be easy. Years of tradition and staunch service parochialism will certainly challenge the idea -- but it must be done.

Secondly, accompanying a shift to all joint war colleges must be curriculums that take the students to a higher cognitive level in several disciplines. With specialization gone and jointness in, this should be relatively easy. The curriculums should focus on the economic, political, and social realms and be tied to interactive learning where the leaders of tomorrow can improve their decisionmaking skills. Awareness and discussion of group dynamics should also be stressed and used as the foundation to focus the learning process in the other disciplines. Some time should be spent talking about how we think, not just what we think. Campaign planning, strategy development, doctrinal analysis and military lessons of history are all still important, but not at levels presently emphasized in most war college curriculums. Tomorrow's leaders must be better prepared to deal with the external environment as the definition of war transforms itself in the emerging information age. This necessitates a slightly new focus in study for leaders getting their last dose of institutional education before they are thrust into a world where debating national policy on Bosnia replaces putting bombs on target as the task at hand.

## OPERATIONAL ASSIGNMENTS

For purposes of our discussion, operational assignments -- the third pillar of leadership development -- are defined as all jobs in a military career except tours qualifying as institutional training or education. Obviously, as a soldier matures, he gains know-how and valuable practical experience from each and every position held.

### *Soldier First*

Early in a military career, technical expertise in a designated specialty is emphasized. For instance, a fighter pilot generally spends the first 10-12 years of his career honing his skills and gradually growing to a position where he spends a good portion of his time mentoring aviators with less experience.

For the soldier/statesman, this is a critical period. Every soldier/statesman must prove himself as a soldier first. This is the career stage where the soldiering foundation is built. Specific job descriptions and duty locations are relatively unimportant at this stage -- building solid credentials as a soldier is of primary importance. But, at the 12-15 year point, specific opportunities and experiences begin to make a difference for the future soldier/statesman. These specifics become more and more important as rank increases.

### *An Example: Colin Powell*

It would be totally off-base to suggest that there is a litany of assignments that form the perfect mold for development of soldier/statesmen. It is true, however, that certain types of experiences definitely serve as the breeding ground for the knowledge needed to subsequently succeed in the dynamic environment faced by the soldier/statesman. Looking at the career of our latest soldier/statesman, Gen. Colin Powell, we can gain some insight into the type of assignments that

benefit future Great Captains.

Colin Powell established his credentials as a soldier during his first eleven years of duty. He held several different and knowledge-enhancing infantry positions, including two tours with infantry units in Vietnam. Sometimes wrongly criticized as more statesman than soldier, he built a solid foundation as a soldier during his early years. This foundation served him extremely well as he progressed. After Powell had ascended to greatness, Henry Lowder, Powell's battalion commander in Vietnam, gave this testimony to his soldiering abilities: "From my personal association with Powell . . . he's a soldier's soldier."<sup>40</sup>

It is true that as Powell progressed in rank he did spend an extraordinary share of his time in Washington. This journey through the Washington bureaucracy obviously served our country well. Duty in the Office of Management and Budget during the Nixon administration, in the Defense Department and Energy Department hierarchies during the Carter years, and as senior military assistant to Secretary of Defense Weinberger during President Reagan's first term produced a military officer fully prepared to assume the heady duties that followed. Just the chance to be around the country's senior leaders and observe the decisionmaking apparatus and process paid dividends. As Eisenhower, echoing the benefits of this type of experience, said of his time as an aide to then Chief of Staff of the Army, Douglas MacArthur: "I was around men who were making decisions and listening to how they did it."<sup>41</sup> Powell's experiences served him likewise.

Powell's assignments throughout the military and civilian bureaucracy created a soldier/statesman prepared for the demanding environment of the times. He was a leader who persevered the tragedy of Vietnam -- aghast at its many failures. This experience left him determined not to repeat those failures by shirking the statesmanship duties required of upper echelon military leadership. Colin Powell listened, learned, and led. As Don Snider, Political-Military Affairs Director for the Center for Strategic and International Studies, said in an October 4, 1993 Air Force Times

story on Powell: "His extensive background as a political insider gave Powell unique strategic vision. And it made him a great deal more farsighted than the service chiefs."<sup>42</sup> Opportunities for exposure to the kind of lessons in statesmanship provided for Colin Powell are shrinking. Future soldier/statesmen must have the chance to listen and learn in these type of assignments.

### *Opportunities Must Continue*

In a February 14, 1994 Air Force Times article entitled "How to Commit Bureaucratic Suicide", Richard Armitage, Assistant Secretary of Defense for International Security Affairs from 1983 to 1989, details the restructuring of the Secretary of Defense's policymaking organization under then-Secretary of Defense Aspin's leadership. The following piece from this article sounds the alarm concerning the sudden evaporation of training grounds for soldier/statesmen under the Clinton administration:

"Compounding the needless disorder imposed on a proud organization was a directive issued early on in the name of the Secretary of Defense. It mandated the phasing out of uniformed military personnel from the ranks of the office's policy professionals. For literally hundreds of skilled and superbly educated "foreign-area officers" of all three services, policy assignments in the Secretary of Defense's office had been the capstones of careers spent doing some amazing and dangerous things for Uncle Sam. This one careless memo said more about contemporary high-level attitudes toward the uniformed military than all of the heat and smoke produced by the controversy over gays in the military."<sup>43</sup>

Assignments in the Defense Department are not the only ones being stripped from our uniformed officers. Formerly military positions on the National Security Council, Energy Department and more are being eliminated or converted to civilian postings. Beyond the problems of the lost expertise, eroding morale, and perpetuation of a strained relationship between the Commander-in-Chief and his soldiers, deeper, darker and longer term problems loom. Without access to high level experience, the soldier/statesmen of tomorrow will be relegated to "second-string" in the decisionmaking structure of our government. As it was in Vietnam, this leads to a "chemical imbalance" on the most important team in our country. For practical purposes, it can be likened to a



situation that developed on the 1993 New York Mets -- a team many have called the "worst team money could buy". As club President, Fred Wilpon, said in a Sports Illustrated article entitled, "The Amazin Collapse of the Mets": "Not enough emphasis was placed on the mix of people and the chemistry that are essential to winning."<sup>44</sup>

The Mets shaped their chemical imbalance by signing big money players without regard to how they would interact and who would fill necessary roles for team cohesion. The Clinton administration is concocting a similar chemical imbalance by shutting out budding soldier/statesmen from the learning experiences in the bureaucracy. This trend must be reversed now or an important voice in the future national decisionmaking team will be underdeveloped.

## CONCLUSION

The history of the soldier/statesman is rich and bountiful. There is much to learn from Great Captains of old like Alexander, to Great Captains of contemporary times like Colin Powell. What is indelibly clear is the role of the soldier/statesman has been an instrumental necessity in the evolution of society. And it will undoubtedly continue to be important as we enter the next chapter of societal evolution. The context of development and the context of placement within the world order may change, as it has in the past, but the importance of this essential figure will not diminish. In our fast-paced and paradoxically myopic world, we must not let these facts escape our attention. Soldier/statesmen must be given the opportunity to develop.

This essay has brought forth three specific areas that can be used to concentrate the effort and ensure future soldier/statesmen are ready for their call. Enhancing efforts in self-development, institutional training, and operational assignments form a broad base where appropriately directed efforts will ensure military leaders of tomorrow are ready for the world's omnipresent challenges. In most instances, the onus is on the institution (the U.S. military) to make the changes necessary to

prepare our leaders of tomorrow; but, the attention and cooperation of senior civilian leadership are also a must.

Specifically, SLDI or a similar feedback instrument for our senior leaders is overdue. It should be formalized and administratively institutionalized, but remain as confidential feedback for our senior leadership.

The time for a structural change at the highest level of senior PME is now. We exist in a joint warfighting environment. All senior PME should be conducted in a thoroughly integrated joint environment. Curriculums should be designed to reflect the times also. An understanding of how we think and not what we think should underpin a curriculum appropriately addressing the political/military environment. Warfighting should always remain the focus. However, it must be addressed at its highest and broadest conceptual level, in tune with the world of tomorrow not yesterday.

Operational assignments and experiences ultimately shape the soldier/statesman of tomorrow. Opportunities to gain this prerequisite experience must not be closed down. Together these initiatives will move us forward and other good ideas will be born to help develop the next soldier/statesman -- an important member of our decisionmaking team.

The Vietnam struggle served as the bud for this project. Like a bud, it blossomed into a much larger flower. Unlike the flower, though, I hope the ideas herein do not die, but instead, continue to grow. Vietnam's tragedy sprang from many flaws. Absence of a soldier/statesman was one. We can control this part of the equation with appropriate attention and vision.

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